

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 CU-02 OMB-01 IO-10 /068 W

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R 240815Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0139

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1369

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TH

SUBJ: VOCATIONAL STUDENT VIOLENCE

REF: A. FBIS BANGKOK 230157

B. FBISBANGKOK 231330

1. STUDENTS FROM BANGKOK NORTH ENGINEERING SCHOLL AND BANGSON ENGINEERING SCHOLL TRIED JANUARY 22 TO DEMONSTRATE TO EACH OTHER THAT POWER GROWS OUT OF THE BARREL OF A GUN (REF A). THEY FAILED MISERABLY, BUT IN THE PROCESS KILLED "BANGKOK POST" PHOTOGRAPHER CHUSAK CHOETCHUCHAI, AND WOUNDED METROPOLITAN POLICE COMMISSIONER LT, GENERAL NARONG MAHANON AND SIX OTHER POLICEMEN.

2. INTERSCHOOL RIVALRY WAS THE CAUSE OF THE INCIDENT. THE MOST SERIOUS ASPECT WAS THAT THE STUDENTS WERE HEAVILY ARMED WITH ALL KINDS OF EAPONS, INCLUDING CARBINES. NEARLY AS SERIOUS WAS THE FACT THAT THE 400 POLICE SENT TO THE SCENE EARLY IN THE EVENING ON JANUARY 22 DID NOTHING TO STOP THE BATTLE, AND IN THE END ARRESTED ONLY TWO STUDENTS. THE KILLERS OF THE "POST" PHOTOGRAPHER ARE STILL FREE.

3. PRESS REACTION TO THE KILLING DAMNS BOTH THE STUDENTS AND THE POLICE. THE PAPERS CALL FOR AN IMMEDIATE CRACKDOWN ON THE STUDENTS AND WARN THAT ANARCHY IS FAST BECOMING A BETTER DESCRIPTION OF THAILAND THAN FREEDOM
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(REFB). THE "BANGKOK POST", IN A JANUARY 24 EDITORIAL,

DESCRIBES CHUSAK'S DEATH AS A "TRAGEDY" AND BLAMES STUDENTS, TEACHERS, POLITICIANS AND POLICE. IT THEN CONCLUDES. "BUT FAR, FAR MORE TRAGIC IS THAT THESE CRIMINALS AND THIS ELITE WILL LIVE TO KILL ANOTHER DAY ... OTHER PEOPLE.. AND PERHAPS OUR WON SOCIETY."

4. COMMENT: THERE IS NO DIRECT POLITICALISSUE INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT. THE POTENTIAL POLITICAL FALL OUT. HOWEVER, IS SIGNIFICANT. THIS LATEST EXAMPLE OF VOCATIONAL STUDENT BARBARISM AND HOOLIGANISM IS ONE MORE ARGUMET FOR A STRONG LAW AND ORDER GOVERNMENT. THANOM'S RETURN IN DECEMBER RAISED PEOPLE'S FEARS ABOUT A POSSIBLE RETURN OF THE "OLD CLIQUE" AND MIGHT HAVE ENCOURAGED MANY THAI TO VOTE AGAINST FORMER UTPP POLITICIANS. THE LATEST STUDENT VIOLENCE, HOWEVER, COULD WORK IN FAVOR OF AT LEAST THE THAI NATION PARTY WHICH HAS CAMPAIGNED AALL ALONG ON THE NEED FOR LAW AND ORDER.
KINTNER

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Message Attributes

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